

that he would perform an updated prior art search and, in the absence of finding any further pertinent prior art, the claims would be in condition for allowance.

The applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance and a favorable decision to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 29, 36 and 40 as follows:

29. (Amended) A [The] process [according to claim 28, further comprising the step of]
of fabricating a semiconductor device comprising the steps of:
forming a first insulating film on a semiconductor substrate;
forming a second insulating film on said first insulating film, said second insulating film
being made of a material different from that of the first insulating film and having a thickness
smaller than that of the first insulating film;
forming a third insulating film on said second insulating film, said third insulating film
being made of a material different from that of the second insulating film and having a thickness
larger than that of the second insulating film;
forming a groove in a region of said third insulating film, in which a wiring is to be
formed, said groove having a bottom to which said second insulating film is exposed;
forming a metal wiring in said groove; and
removing a part of that portion of the second insulating film which is exposed to the
groove, and a part of the first insulating film under the portion of the second insulating film, and
thus forming a contact hole reaching to the semiconductor substrate, wherein the contact hole is
buried with a metal in the step of forming a metal wiring in said groove.

36. (Amended) The process according to claim [28] 29, further comprising the step of forming a barrier film on inner surfaces of said groove.

40. (Amended) A process of fabricating a semiconductor device comprising the steps of:

forming a first insulating film on a semiconductor substrate;

forming a second insulating film on said first insulating film, said second insulating film being made of a material different from that of the first insulating film and having a thickness smaller than that of the first insulating film;

forming a third insulating film on said second insulating film, said third insulating film being made of a material different from that of the second insulating film and having a thickness larger than that of the second insulating film;

forming a groove in said third insulating film having a bottom comprising said second insulating film; and

forming a wiring material in said groove,

wherein said step of forming said groove comprises;

etching through said second insulation film to expose said first insulation film while leaving a remaining second portion of said second insulation film;

removing a third portion of said first insulation film to expose said substrate while leaving a remaining fourth portion of said first insulation film.